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PATRIS

FLORENCE ELLINWOOD ALLEN





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PATRIS

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BY

FLORENCE ELLINWOOD ALLEN

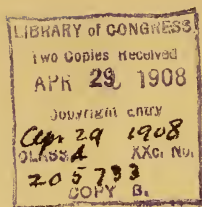


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Cleveland

TO MARION PRENTISS STRATTON

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PATRIS

THE OLD WORLD TO THE NEW

Stand there, Magnificent, with free, unbended head,
The dawn within your eyes!

I, too, was young once, and strong, but not so,
For in darkness I lay,
And heard but the raging of beasts that were men,
As I waited the day.

For eons of night I groped madly alone,
As they stifled my mind,
And the passion of love that surged up in my heart
Was impotent, blind.

They trained my deft hands to all fanciful art,
To trace marvelous line,
To hew stone into form, to pour life into clay,
Make all seen beauty mine.

And my fingers are lord of the chisel and brush
That your hands cannot hold,
And vast flooding harmonies surge through my soul
When your spirit lies cold.

But O for the uplift, the unfettered mind
That beams from your brow !
The poise of the soul that can act, need not feel,
Can act, and knows how !

And I count all my culture but barrenest gain
From the years that are sped,
As I gaze on my passion-swept age, and your youth,
And know myself dead !

EAST

What are these that huddle in thy gates?
A countless, hideous rabble: Call ye them children?

With twisted, tortured bodies, shrivelled arms, and
evil-conscious faces,
For them the only warmth the roaring fires of glass
and factory furnace,
The dampness of the mines;
Instead of meadow-flowers, dank and clinging odors;
Ears that should hear the song of birds, and hum
of bees,
And trilling of the cricket, numbed and deaf
With crash of drill and loom and rumble of the
chute;
Eyes beauty-loving, dulled with unloveliness,
Seared by the glare of furnace, blind
With staring, mole-like, in the senseless dark;
Budding souls crushed lifeless under heel.

Out of the slavery of other lands they came to us
For freedom.
What are we doing with them, East, my East?

WEST

Oh it's West, and my West I am singing,
 With its infinite stretches of sky,
And the yellow light of the morning,
 Ablaze on the uplands high;
With the clouds lying low in the valleys
Like folds of soft-billowing white,
 And the spruce blue-grey
 And the aspen a-sway
On the mesa's brown-shelving height.

And it's West, my West, I am singing,
 The mountains all misty-grey,
And the quivering lights on the foothills
 Like stars that swing and that sway,
When the flying lights from the engine
Flash out on a blur of sand,
 And the telegraph-wire,
 Silver-threaded with fire,
Leads on to the Wonderful Land!

Ah, West, my West, keep thee noble!
 For the freedom of hills is vain,
And the breath of thy mountain-meadows
 May stifle as that of the plain,
If violence sap thy justice,
In the grapple 'twixt passion and greed,
 And the limitless might
 Of free, inborn right
Decay to unchecked, lawless deed.

LAW

Ere Montesquieu communed with thee alone,
And knew the spirit of thee, soul to soul;
Ere Draco warped thy stern benevolence
To cruel rigor;
Ere Hammurabi graved his code of stone
And named thee to the world,
Thou wast!

Before the heavens shaped them of the void,
Before the seething, boundless floods were stayed,
Before the ancient streams and deathless hills,
Thou wast!

Thou art eternal; from thee all things spring,
To thee again return. Always and ever,
Thou art!

Thou art not cabined into mortal shape,
Yet of thee comes all symmetry of form,
And graceful sweep of line, and play of color.
Thou art unheard, and yet thy essence dwells
In every cadence of a throbbing song,
Or swelling onrush of a symphony.
Thou art all beauty, as thou art all life.

Nay, if we lose thee for a flash of time,
Bow to the falsehood of new passions, sway to
blasts
Of furious feeling — thou changest not.

Nations who live without thee surely die;
Die, not the easy death of sudden ruin,
But gradual wasting, innermost decay,
The state a prey to evil — a bitter thing,
The exalted so defiled!
—Yet thy firm purpose orders as before.

Where is our Pilgrim sense of solid right?
Where is our old-time keeping of the law?
Where is our sturdy sanity and strength?
 Rapine pardoned, violence unpunished,
The excellent citizens unheeding!

Law, thou changest not.
Our heritage it was to know thee.
Do we sell thee for a mess of pottage?

PROPHETS

Not in the guise of prophets stern of old,
In white-lipped anger, hand in threatening
 raised,
Visions of blinding loveliness with horror
 mazed,
Deep hallowed love unto the people cold ;

Not as the devotee in cowl and hood,
Frame racked by toil and fasting, deep eyes
 keen
To spy out evil, lips aye clean
And powerful to denounce the indifferent good ;

But in the little signs of slow decay ;
The first faint rift within the wall rock-hewn,
Irregular and jagged, where too soon
A mighty fissure rends along its way.

The sale of public posts by those professed
To guard their country's honor, and the shame
Of party bribery — treason, not in name,
But in the heart of it, too well confessed :

These be the lesser prophets, and their cry
Is potent with the doom of lands that die.

Lo, yonder where the wall is undermined,
Property never safe from grasping wealth,
Person unsuccored from the blow of stealth
Or openness ; judger and wrong combined.

And, yonder, at the very temple gate,
 In dapper garb, with white and taper hands,
 Men of our race, but born of other lands
And times, do still and subtly lie in wait,

With sensual sneer and principles diseased
 To teach the creed of moral unrestraint,
 And plant the swift-maturing seed of taint.

These be our greater prophets, and their cry
Is anguished with the doom of lands that die.

LAND-SIGHTING

Somewhere within that heavy western mist
There lies my native land.
Almost I could, across the lapse of waves,
Feel her swift, silent greeting.

Lovelier than any green alluring isle,
Fringèd with slender palms, and honey-sweet,
Where the enchantment languorous of the Orient
 broods;
More glamored than the romance-hallowed shores
Of Europe, with its ruined keeps and towers,
And potent spells that hover in the dusk
Of echoing cathedrals —
That low coast, still invisible, but felt, almost with
 pain.

Stronger than any man of steel in force and bound-
 less freedom,
Weaker than any shell-like girl in thy dependence,
Thy utter need of us, the people,
Thou and thy being, in glory or in stigma, freedom
 or enslavement,
Care I or not, I share in shaping thee.

Somehow to guard thee from betrayal,
Keep thy brow high, thy pure heart pure.

MORNING-SONG

Rosy cloud and a skylark's song:
Wake, my little one, wake!
The spurge lies russet the fields along,
And the daisies dance to the wind's blithe song:
Wake, my little one, wake!

The faint moon floats in a sea of blue!
Wake, my little one, wake!
Where only a white-capped cloud or two
Ever hides her pallid face from view,
Wake, my little one, wake!

Wake, little girl, and I'll show to you
Buttercup gold set with diamond dew,
Strawberries crimson before the sun,
And the gossamer web on the grasses spun,
That shimmers like silk in its rainbow sheen,
A wedding-robe for the fairy queen.
Wake, my little one, wake!

IN CHAPEL

The opal windows flush and glow
 With golden flaming fire ;
A tender choral, lingering slow
From soft notes tremulous and low,
 Triumphant rises higher.

Dear Alma Mater, as we bow
 Before thy sacred shrine,
We long to have thy spirit true,
To shape our awkward lives anew
 To love and strength like thine.

And, deeply as the windows flash
 The glorious western sun,
So may our lives show forth thy sign,
Thy breadth of influence benign,
 Until our lives are done.

VER IMMORTALE

Long lines of low-banked, sombre trees
And sullen sky;
Fast-shifting, faded, barren fields,
That past me fly;
Dead leaves where dainty wind-flowers danced,
Dead limbs where laughing sunbeams glanced
In days gone by.

But come, cast off this coward gloom,
My heart, and sing!
Mind not the howling winter winds,
Nor frost, nor sting!
Ere long, upspringing through the snow,
The yellow crocus-cups will glow,
And then — the Spring!

BEETHOVEN

He caught from lucent stars, each one, a note,
And strung them into linkèd melody;
From crashing storms he took his thundering chords,
And raging tempest music.
The still calm of a starless, breathless night
Sang in his soul its wonderful adagios.

HAGAR

Sleep, sleep!

Wraith-like moon in an ashen sky;
Thick white mists creep up the hill,
Gaunt-limbed and black are the weighted trees;
And the air is choked, and hot, and still.

Well sleep!

Wander there in your Eden bright;
Reap the harvest of fading hours;
Waken to life all sorrow-free,
And bring me a rose from those dream-sweet bowers.

Sleep, sleep!

The time will come, perhaps, some day —
God knows the time will come too soon! —
When you, as I, shall watch the play
Of shadows cast by a wan-faced moon —
Shadows that turn and twist and leer,
As they mock at the hopes of the bygone year.

Sleep, sleep!

ORPHEUS

Down through the long dark avenues of pain
I follow her dear face, all strained and white,
And see again her flower-form fall back
Into the cavernous depths. Zeus! For one little
look!

Would that I too had died when there she fell,
Stung 'mid the waving grass; then in the fields
Sunlit, Elysian, zephyr-lulled, we two
Should wander hand in hand, and twine our cups
With glossy-leavèd myrtle, and with iris, pale
As her own lovely face.

For one little look!

Eurydice!

SONG OF THE RAILS

Farewell to the land of the rolling hills,
Of the yellow-crested corn,
And hail to the land of the rolling sand,
Where the primrose flower is born!

The long, low ridges climb in the West
To a blue-hazed, nearing wall,
And I know that there lie the mountains bare,
Bristling with pine-trees tall.

For the dim East pales, as the glistening rails
Leap into a single line,
And the burnished curve, with its long-bent swerve,
Leads on to the world that is mine!

COLLEGE RECESSIONAL

Wisdom all-wise, which e'er hast shown
Mere human knowledge to be lies,
Casting to earth the lordly king
Making him as the beast that dies,
Grant us Thy mercy, make us know
We are Thy creatures, weak and low.

If, mad with learning, we essay
Foppery of knowledge proud to wear;
If, with our glittering sheaves of facts,
To count ourselves divine we dare! —
Grant us Thy vision, make us know
That we are trifling, worthless, low.

Grant us to sift the false from true,
And never from the true to part.
Grant us the living truth to win
And wear forever on our heart.
Grant us Thy wisdom, make us know
Thyself, our victory below.

TO CHARIS

I call to my love, for the spring has returned,
Flower-crownèd, joy-girt, and the violets are
 blooming,

The white-clustered locusts bend low with perfume,
And the valley, her gay garb of verdure assuming
Smiles into my eyes. Shall my flower of to-morrow,
My blossom the sweetest — still hold me in sorrow?

I call to my love, for the spring has returned —
Shy-glancing, sweet spring, and the robins are
 singing

In shrill-noted carols of jubilant life,
In clear, warbling trills from pure happiness spring-
 ing.

And shall my sweet singer, my music divine,
Be mute, and rob me of the song that is mine?

ANANIAS

One-tenth of my God-given, misered soul
I render back to him, and, guiltless, cry
“Lord, here is all !”

SONNET

Then I must bid my dream for aye good-bye —
 My dream so fair, and, like a wind-flower, frail ?
 I covered it away, lest it should fail,
And only when the blue stars lit the sky,
Like some coward thief I watched the shimmers fly
 Before my flickering light, adown its veil —
 Knew it for mine, yet even in the pale
Grey dawn, I dared not think so, lest it die.

Ah, Love! tho' all my life be one lost hope,
 One glimpse of crimson joy whose fragile head
Bent in my hand, yet that it was the true
Which for a moment led me, as I grope
 Within the bitter, barren waste, heart-dead,
I sing! I may have lost my dream — I still have you!

FIFTHS

Here 'mid the tremulous dusk,
Here 'mid the shadowing memories,
Play me the old, old songs of the withered years.
Play till the ivory keys pass like human fingers
Over the vibrant strings of a ringing harp.
Out of the darkness — play to me —

WESTERN CRADLE-SONG

✓
Sleep, little boy with the dusky eyes!
Over the mountains a rosy haze
Is veiling the snow-peaks which ever raise
 Their glistening height to the skies.
The mourning-dove in the sage-brush grey
Has silenced her tiresome, wailing song;
And the prairie-dog, in his sand-castle strong,
Has tucked himself snugly away.

And, if you sleep well, little boy mine,
You'll come to the land where Joyousness dwells,
Where columbines toss their waxen bells,
 And sunbeams softly their rays entwine
With the vibrant leaves of the aspen trees,
Where downy white cotton-boats float the breeze,
And the violet under the sage-brush lies.
So sleep, little boy with the dusky eyes!

EN VOYAGE

Low swings the sun, pale-gold, into pearly cloud ;
Endless and deep and calm the silent sea,
Save for the dashing spray that curls and laughs
aloud,

Blowing a rainbow out on the wind to me.
And I think of the life and love so far behind,
Of the boundless, pathless plains that stretch
between,

—When lo! my rainbow of hope upon the wind,
My new old friends—the friends I had never
seen!

SERENADE

Slow-swinging star-lamps,
 Shedding veiled light,
Shine for my love
 In her dreaming to-night.
Say with your star-beams
 I'd gladly be blind
To the sky's soft enchantment,
 If once I might find
Awake in her brown eyes
 The starlight of love,
Far deeper and brighter
 Than radiance above.

Low-breathing zephyr,
 Arbutus-sweet,
Waft your cool breezes
 My princess to greet ;
Tell her the incense
 From far meadows blown,
Fringed with white violets,
 Adder-tongue sown,
Is naught to the sweetness
 Of her own dear face,
Fragrant in exquisite
 Frail flower-grace.

VALENTINE

Ah, love of my heart, to delight thee
What valentine gift shall I bring?
Fresh wreaths of deep-crimsoning roses,
Or daffodils, fragrant of Spring?

Nay, love, they will wither and blacken —
Mere ashes of beauty impart —
My treasure of treasures I give thee,
A loving and unchanging heart.

TO C. R.

As some industrious, tawny bee
Delves into incense-hearted flowers,
And, gathering sweetness, bears it hence
To store up future joy for friends:
So thou, in healthful joyousness,
Dost gather up the pollen-dust
Of unmixed happiness from life,
And bear it with thee, to dispense
In free good comradeship to us.

THE SUN-DIAL

College Campus, W. R. U.

Others may count the hours of sullen age,
Or the insensate days of babyhood;
I do but mark the beautiful and good,
The book of youth, in joy-illuminated page.

Winters, when wonderful the windows glow,
Shot with their crimson, sapphire and pure
gold,
Across the grey of chapel, and the cold,
Unlimited expanse of drifted snow;

Summers, when sunrise cuts its swaths of light
Across the turf, and cool the morning air
Shimmers adown the ivy; when the fair
And splendid stars flash out upon the night—

I dwell 'mid joy — the joy and happy pain
Of unembittered lives, that strive and strain,
Trusting they shall at last the heights attain.

Others may count lacklustre hours of age,
Of drudgery, the witherer of truth;
For me the record of all-glorious youth,
Lambent with hope its rosy-tinted page.

TRANSLATIONS

INTERLUDE TO SAKUNTALA

Kalidasa

Great God of blind Love, how pierce thy keen
 darts,
Though, tipped with soft flowers, cool seemed
 they to me,
In those crimson buds lurks a wild Hara flame.
They blaze as Barava, e'en under the sea.
Ah! thou and the moon, cruel one, e'er deceive!
We call thy shafts flowered, and her bright
 beams cold,
Who glories in dewy rays fire to shed,
As thou to a diamond-point, flower-darts to
 mould.

If thou, who now woundest me e'en to the heart,
Dost grant me delight that I die through my
 love,
Draw not to its head thy most merciless shaft —
That the hurt may throb deeper — and ye, Gods
 above,
Give that I may see her! Ah, fresh-blooming
 stems
And leaves, were ye plucked by her own little
 hand?
And tomala banks, with your breezes that waft
Faint, shy lily-fragrance above from the strand
Of spray-dashing Malni, and vine-covered
 grove —
Sakuntala comes — on the firm, yellow sand
The mark of her feet — my heart and my love!

STUDENT'S SPEECH

Sakuntala

To the grey west, the moon, who kindles red beams
Of asadhi, sinks to his low dawn-soft bed.
While yonder the sun and his bright charioteer
Drive up the steep hills, with their rosy veil
spread.

The night-flower leaves but a memory of sweet,
Languishing still, as a bride, young and shorn
Of her dearly beloved ; on vadari stems
Quiver dewdrops all purple in tints of red morn.

The peacock shakes out of his sleep, and departs
From the cool hermit huts, thatched with
hallowed grass ;
And the antelopes spring from their beds near the
stream ;
The forest-leaves rustle as lightly they pass.

How the pale moon is fallen and robbed of his
beams —

The moon who upon Sumuru, mountain-king,
Set proudly his foot, and scattering night's rear,
Even up to the palace of Vishnu did swing !

WOOD-NYMPH'S SONG

Sakuntala

Waft, breezes, afar for her joying,
Rich dust from purple flowers,
Clear, silent pools of water,
Green with the leaves of lotus;
Cool ye her woodland journey;
Grant your aid to her delight.

L. OF C.

THEOCRITUS, IDYLL I

Description of a Cup

Here is a bowl smoothed o'er with fragrant wax,
Two-handed, newly carved, sweet-smelling still
From 'neath the chisel ; all around the brim
There weaves an ivy-vine, its glossy leaves
With helichrys entwined ; the graceful shoot
Is graven with the luscious, purple fruit.

Within, a girl by workmanship divine
Is wrought, well-garbed in fillet and in robe.
Near by two men, dressed foppishly, hold strife,
Now one and now another, in hot words.
The maid, all coquetry, marks not their wrath,
But now with smiles she turns one luckless head,
And now again the other ; they, in love,
Uselessly strive, on fire at her caprice.

Near them is graven stark a rugged cliff,
Upon it, hastening, a fisherman
Wrinkled, but casting with a mighty throw
His net, and straining as a brawny man.
Such is the play of muscle, you would say
You really saw him fish ; so swell the cords
Upon his sinewy neck ; spite of his beard,
All silver, he has youth's own strength.

Beside the hale old salt,
A branching vine, heaped high with ruddy fruit ;
A youngster, sitting near the hedge, keeps watch

Thereover. Two sly foxes play
About, one darting up and down the rows
And nibbling grapes; the other shrinkingly
Creeps closer to the well-filled luncheon-bag,
Resolving ne'er to let the rascal go
Until he's left completely dinnerless.
Meanwhile the boy, all ardor, plaiting grass,
Weaves him a cage for crickets; little care
Has he for wallets, or for stolen fruit,
So deeply buried in that cricket-cage.

And over all the cup are carven thorns,
Like foreign work — I know you'll like it well.
So often as your lip shall touch its brim
The golden Hours shall seem to bear you up
To fullest joy.

THEOCRITUS, IDYLL I

Extracts from the Lament for Daphnis

“Where then were ye, O nymphs, when Daphnis
wasted in sorrow?
Gathering hyacinths fair in the fragrant vales of
Peneius,
Leading your light-footed revels upon the steep hill-
slopes of Pindus?
Surely you turned not your dance by the rushing
river Anapus,
Nor by the peaks of sharp Ætna, nor sacred waters
of Acis.”

Lead, ah Muses beloved, lead the pastoral measure.

Cypris came last to him, laughing, radiant, and
blushing, and golden,
Laughing in triumph deceitful, merciless e'en in her
beauty,
And taunting—“This, then, is the boaster who
threatened to conquer sweet Cypris?
See him now hopelessly caught in the meshes of mas-
terful Eros !”

Lead, ah Muses beloved, lead the pastoral measure.

Unto her Daphnis made answer, "Cypris, thou
pitiless sweetness,
Cypris all worthy of reverence, Cypris most bane-
ful to mortals,
By thy command has the sunlight faded from
Daphnis forever?
Nay—in the black depths of Hades Love will find
Daphnis unconquered."

Lead, ah Muses beloved, lead the pastoral measure.

"Go to thy old love, Anchises, far on the green
slopes of Ida,
There take thy pleasure in oaks, not here in the
low-lying sedges,
Here, where the tawny-backed bees buzz round the
honey-sweet beehives."

Lead, ah Muses beloved, lead the pastoral measure.

"Ah, wolves that lurk in the thickets, bears that
climb fleetly the mountain,
Farewell—no longer shall Daphnis revel with you
in the woodlands,
Nor in the thick-leaving copses, nor groves.
And you, Arethusa,
Farewell, and ye streams swiftly gushing in bright-
flashing waters down Thymbris."

Lead, ah Muses beloved, lead the pastoral measure.

“Pan, Pan, whether you dwell on the far-stretching
range of Lycæus,
Or on the summits of Mænalus, come unto sea-
compassed Sicily ;
Come, great king, and bear with thee thy pipe, all
grace and all fragrance,
Scented with firm-pressed wax, carven with well-
rounded mouthpiece.
Conquered by pitiless Love, I journey alone to bleak
Hades.”

Lull, ah Muses beloved, lull ye the pastoral measure.

Thus the herdsman's life ended ; and Cypris would
gladly have raised him,
But all the slight thread of his fate had passed
through the hands of the Moiræ.
So Daphnis crossed the dark river ; the eddying
swirls of the torrent,
Rushing, closed over the man beloved of the
Nymphs and the Muses.

LES NUITS DE JUIN

Hugo

In summer, when day flees away, flower-veiled,
The plain pours wine-sweet from each blossom
that sways;
Eyes closed, and ears straining for murmurings
failed,
I slumber, soft-mantled in transparent haze.

The stars are more pure, every shadow a bower,
A wandering half-day tints the dome arching
high ;
And dawn, sweet and pale, only waiting her hour,
Seems to wander all night at the edge of the sky.

✓
WHENCE COMETH MY HELP

Know ye the mountains and their wondrous peace?
Ye who from worse than trial crave release,
From bitter questioning of heaven and earth,
Suspects of gladness, save for children's mirth;
Callous to sorrow, save for children's tears;
Stung by injustice that will never cease—
Know ye the mountains and their nameless peace?

Surely there dwells not anywhere such calm,
Such silence musical, a very psalm
Of majesty to pierce the doubt of years.

Up from the purpling grass that gently sways,
Off to the dark-brown northern range I gaze;
Out to the silver sheet of water fair—
The hills, aflame with sunset, still are there.
E'en to the south, where lucerne fields are green,
Around me gird the mountains, though unseen.
Before their steadfast strength my feeble fears
Pass as a breath on glass—my questions cease—
Know ye the mountains and their wordless peace?

THE PHARISEE

I thank Thee, Lord, that I am not
As this girl here ;
Old ribbons, worn, and out at heels,
Year after year.

I thank Thee when her ill-bred voice
Essays to speak,
I know enough of things to think
And whisper "Freak!"

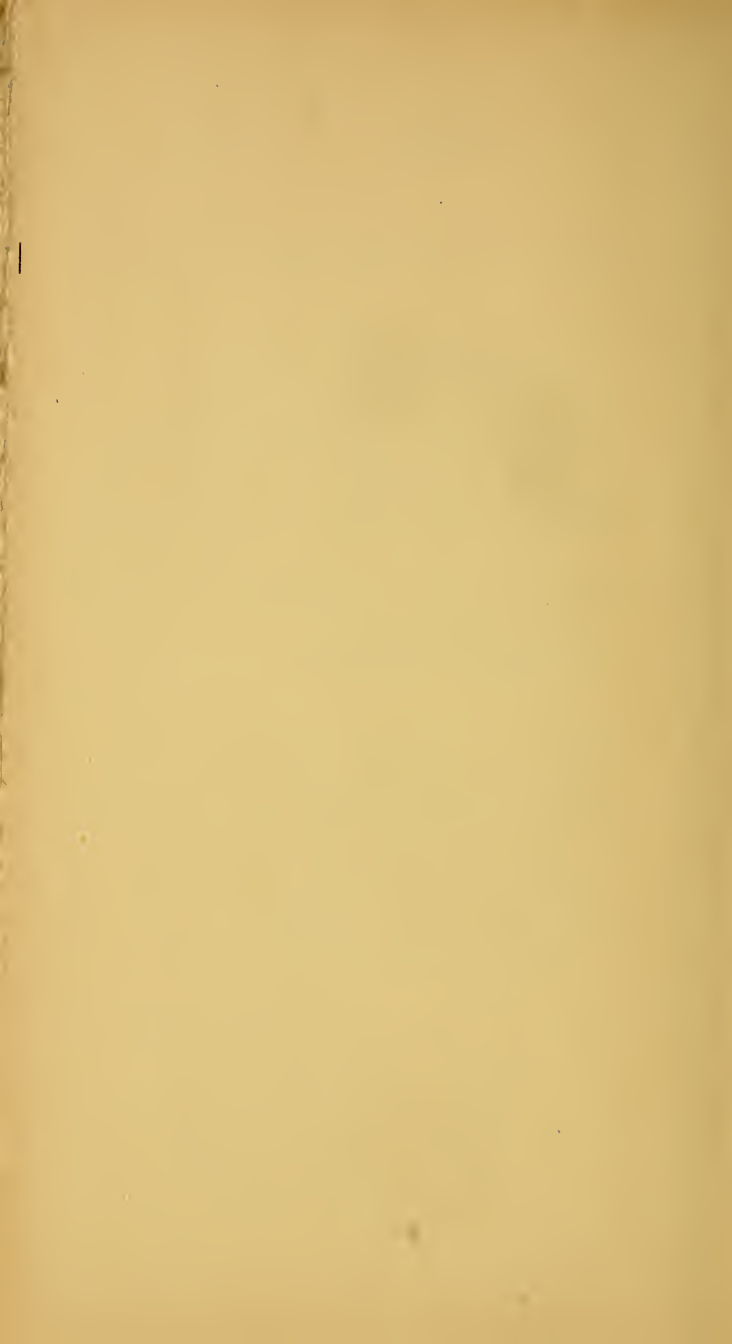
I thank Thee my lot touches not
At all with her ;
I thank Thee for the whiting of
My sepulchre.

THE CALLING OF THE WEST

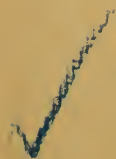
Around me vaguely hover
Grim shadows of unrest.
Steel clouds the hillside cover,
Grey bank on bank thick-pressed ;
But Midas-fingered, lying
On sombre pines, low-sighing,
The sunset lingers, dying,
And calls me to the West.

For where the daylight closes,
With molten, golden sky,
Lie, starred with pale primroses,
My plains of alkali.

And oh ! for purple hazes
That o'er the mountains creep ;
For trackless, sandhill mazes,
And bluffs of limestone steep ;
For stars as brightly beaming
As distant watch-fires gleaming,
Yet veiled with deeper dreaming
Than crimson-poppied Sleep !



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